

# RR



**REASON & REVELATION**

*A Monthly Journal of Christian Evidences*

MARCH 2019 • VOL. 39 • NO. 3

# "A Book of Jewish **FABLES**"?

## Who Did Cain **Marry?**

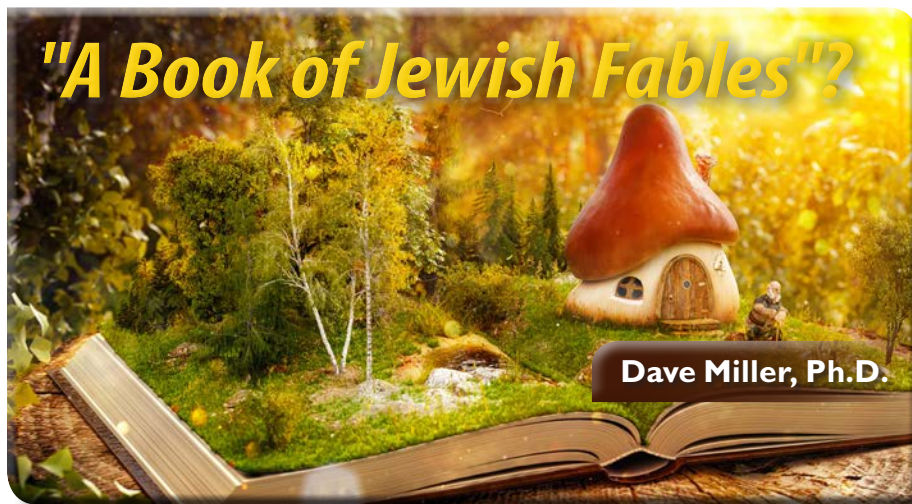
## **New** "Fat" Tract

## What is the **Firmament** of Genesis 1:6?

## Does **Numbers** **5:11-22** Condone **Abortion?**

## Belief in **God** is Hard- Wired into **Man**





*Article In Brief...*



**While many have prematurely concluded that the Bible is nothing more than “a book of Jewish fables,” the evidence indicates otherwise.**

**W**ITH the widespread deterioration of interest in and respect for the Bible in the last half century in America, outspoken ridicule of the inspiration of the Bible has become commonplace in universities, the entertainment industry, and beyond. One such dismissal of the credibility of the Bible is seen in the smug exclamation: “The Bible is simply a book of Jewish fables and fairy tales.” Apart from the heartbreaking sadness in the heart of any Christian who hears such a brazen statement, the level of ignorance possessed by the speaker is appalling. After all, the United States of America was founded in the bosom of the Bible and it exerted a profound influence on American culture for nearly two centuries before it came under relentless attack by sinister forces in education, politics, entertainment, and organizations formed to undermine its influence. Nevertheless, the Bible deserves a fair

consideration before being subjected to such a cavalier, unstudied dismissal.

Consider the dictionary definition of a “fable”:

- **Merriam-Webster:** “a fictitious narrative or statement: such as (a) a legendary story of supernatural happenings, (b) a narration intended to enforce a useful truth especially one in which animals speak and act like human beings”
- **Cambridge Dictionary:** “a short story that tells a moral truth, often using animals as characters.”
- **Webster’s New World College Dictionary:** “1. a fictitious story meant to teach a moral lesson: the characters are usually talking animals; 2. a myth or legend; 3. a story that is not true; falsehood.”
- **Collins Dictionary** defines “fairy tale” as “a story for children involving magical events and imaginary creatures.”

One cannot help but be reminded of the famed Aesop’s fables or the folktales of Uncle Remus and the Brothers Grimm. However, to suggest that the Bible as a literary entity may be largely characterized

as fable betrays either a deep commitment to bias or an abject unacquaintance with the contents of the Bible.<sup>1</sup>

## OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE

**A**n incredible array of evidences exists to demonstrate the supernatural origin of the Bible. For example, unlike fable, biblical literature is saturated with references to specific people and places that have been historically authenticated. Time and time again, when skeptics have challenged its historical claims, the Bible has been consistently vindicated. This brief article will provide the reader with a few examples (out of many) of amazing accuracy in each of six categories: history, geography, topography, science, medicine, and prophecy.

## Historical Accuracy

At one time, skeptics insisted that the nation of the Hittites, mentioned so frequently in the Old Testament (nearly 60 occurrences of the term, e.g., Genesis 23:10; 26:34; Joshua 1:4), never existed. No known evidence was available to verify their historicity. This circumstance provided fodder for those who dismissed the divine authenticity of the Bible. As Wright explained in his 1884 volume *The Empire of the Hittites*:

Now, although the Bible is not a mere compendium of history, its veracity is deeply involved in the historic accuracy of its statements; but the Hittites had no place in classic history, and therefore it was supposed by some that the Bible references to them could not be true. There was a strong presumption that an important people could scarcely have dropped completely out of history, but the strong presumption



did not warrant the unscientific conclusion that the Bible narrative was untrue. It was just possible that classic history might be defective regarding a people of whom sacred history had much to say.... The arguments against the historic accuracy of the Bible, based on its references to the Hittites, are **never likely to appear again in English literature**. The increasing light from Egypt and Assyria reveals to us, in broad outline and in incidental detail, a series of facts, with reference to the Hittites, **in perfect harmony with the narratives of the Bible**.<sup>2</sup>

It was Hugo Winckler who in 1906 excavated Bogazkale—the ancient capital of the Hittite Empire—an expansive site of over 400 acres.<sup>3</sup> Since that time, studies of the ancient Hittites have proliferated. A veritable host of comparable discoveries could be cited that reinforce the same conclusion, including the fact that at least 63 people mentioned in the Old and New Testaments have been verified by actual inscriptional evidence.<sup>4</sup> The New Testament writer Luke mentions 32 countries, 54 cities, and 9 Mediterranean islands, most of which have been historically verified. He even alludes to 95 people, 62 of whom are not mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, and 27 of whom were civil or military leaders.<sup>5</sup> The Bible has repeatedly demonstrated itself to be historically accurate.

### Geographically

The man who has gone down in history as the “Father of Biblical Geography” is Edward Robinson. He is credited with instigating the first serious and extensive explorations of Palestine in order to verify the Bible’s geographical accuracy.<sup>6</sup> He succeeded in identifying nearly

200 biblical sites. Since that time, literally thousands more have been verified. For example, some scholars once considered the account of the Queen of Sheba’s visit to Solomon to be a bit of fictitious romance. However, not only has Sheba been located in southern Arabia, the Sabaeen people were known for their trade exploits as reflected in the Queen’s camel caravan of spices, gold, and precious stones (1 Kings 10:2). As a book from antiquity, the Bible stands alone in the extent to which its geographical accuracy has been substantiated.

### Topographically

Topography refers to the layout of land, i.e., the three-dimensional surface configuration of its physical features, including mountains, valleys, plains, elevations, etc. Incredibly, the Bible has shown itself to be topographically accurate. For example, we are informed in Genesis 12:8 that when Abraham moved from Moreh to the mountain east of Bethel, “he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the

east.” Any map of Bible lands will confirm this configuration. In Joshua 7:2, “Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth Aven, on the east side of Bethel.” This topographical arrangement is also easily verified. In Acts 8:26, Phillip was commanded to “go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” Not only is Gaza southwesterly from Jerusalem, the elevation literally descends from Jerusalem to Gaza, from approximately 700 meters (2,300 feet) to 35 meters (115 feet). Such examples could be multiplied endlessly. The Bible is topographically accurate.

### Scientifically

The Bible is also scientifically accurate—though it was never intended to function as a science book. While not written in modern scientific jargon, its passing allusions to scientific realities are represented accurately. Note the following listing of but a few scientific facts:

- The Laws of Thermodynamics: Genesis 2:1; 2:2; Isaiah

**Reason & Revelation** is published monthly by Apologetics Press, Inc. Periodicals postage paid at Montgomery, AL. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to **Reason & Revelation**, 230 Landmark Dr., Montgomery, AL 36117; **ISSN:**[1542-0922] **USPS#** 023415.

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51:6; Psalm 102:26; Hebrews 1:11

- The water cycle (condensation-precipitation-evaporation): Ecclesiastes 1:7; 11:3; Amos 9:6
- Innumerable stars: Genesis 15:5; Jeremiah 33:22
- The parting of light: Job 38:24
- Trenches on the ocean floor: Job 38:16

These are but a small sampling of the Bible's uncanny accuracy in matters of science.

### Medically

The Bible manifests supernatural acquaintance with modern medical procedures that were far ahead of their time. Ancient civilizations certainly had their notions of medical thinking. But for the most part, their ideas are associated with superstition and ignorance. Not so with the Author of the Law of Moses. Consider just five:

- Avoiding communicable disease from dead bodies: Numbers 19:12
- The principle of quarantine: Leviticus 13:45-46
- Necessity of human waste disposal: Deuteronomy 23:12
- Optimum time for circumcision surgery: Leviticus 12:3
- Blood as the key to life: Leviticus 17:11-14

### Prophetically

The Bible's divine origin is particularly on display when one examines its predictive prophetic utterances. The general timeframe of the creation of the books of the Bible has been well established. A host of prophecies in the Old Testament can be demonstrated to have been spoken hundreds

of years before their fulfillment. Again, here is a listing of only a few:

- The fall of Tyre: Ezekiel 26
- Zedekiah would not see Babylon: Ezekiel 12:8-13
- The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: Daniel 9:26
- The fall of Babylon: Isaiah 13-14; Jeremiah 50-51; et al.
- Babylon would be conquered by a man named Cyrus: Isaiah 44:28; 45:1-7
- The rise and fall of Alexander the Great: Daniel 8:5-8

Again, these are only a handful of the incredible number of inspired predictions that riddle the Bible, particularly the Old Testament. The Bible, in fact, contains hundreds of prophecies. Over 300 pertain to the life of Christ on Earth.

### SUMMARY

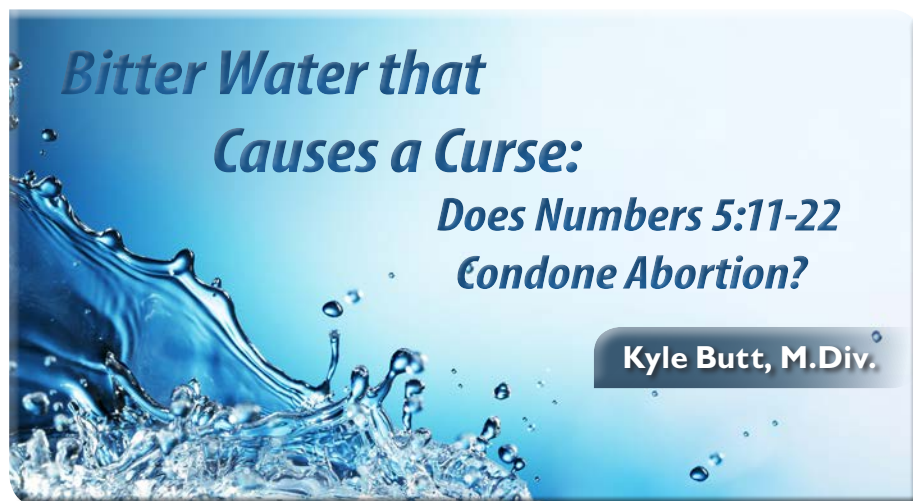
A “book of Jewish fables” or “fairy tales”? Such characterizations cannot—and never will be—sustained. No archaeologist's spade will ever uncover the home of the seven dwarves or the palace of the wicked queen. But King Ahab's ivory palace has been discovered and excavated (1 Kings 22:39).<sup>7</sup> The location of the briar patch into which Brer Bear tossed Brer Rabbit never existed. But Hezekiah's water tunnel really exists (2 Kings 20:20).<sup>8</sup> Rumpelstiltskin, Hansel, and Gretel were not actual historical personages. But the Assyrian King Sargon II, whose historicity was **initially** questioned since his name occurred nowhere else in ancient literature, was found to have actually lived (Isaiah 20:1).<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the Bible surpasses all other books in human history—which is precisely what one would expect if its Author is God. The great tragedy is that so many have dismissed the Bible on the

flimsy ground of popular hearsay, depriving themselves of the marvelous self-authentication provided within its pages. Here, indeed, is the Word of God—a message from Deity Himself—announcing His desire that all people be saved in order to be with Him in heaven for all eternity, thereby avoiding the only possible alternative of endless suffering in hell.

### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Some have asserted that Balaam's talking donkey in Numbers 22:28 is evidence of fable in the Bible. However, see Dave Miller and Jeff Miller (2019), “Does Balaam's Talking Donkey Prove that the Bible is a Book of Fables?” Apologetics Press, <http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=13&article=5660>.
- <sup>2</sup> William Wright (1884), *The Empire of the Hittites* (New York: Scribner & Welford), pp. viii-ix. See also Sir Frederic Kenyon (1940), *The Bible and Archaeology* (London: George Harrap), pp. 81ff.
- <sup>3</sup> Joseph Free (1992), *Archaeology and Bible History* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, revised edition), p. 108.
- <sup>4</sup> Jack Lewis (1971), *Historical Backgrounds of Bible History* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), p. 178.
- <sup>5</sup> Bruce M. Metzger (2003), *The New Testament: Its Background, Growth, Content* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press), p. 171.
- <sup>6</sup> Frederick Bliss (1903), *The Development of Palestine Exploration* (London: Hodder & Stoughton), pp. 184-223, <https://apologeticspress.page.link/The-Development-of-Palestine-Exploration>.
- <sup>7</sup> Director of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, John Crowfoot, directed the expedition that excavated the ancient city of Samaria from 1931 to 1935. Ahab reigned during the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.
- <sup>8</sup> Hezekiah lived from 715 to 687 B.C. Anticipating a possible siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrians, his engineers blocked the Gihon spring's water outside the city and diverted it to the Pool of Siloam via a channel which they cut through stone beneath the city. An inscription verifying the work was found within the tunnel.
- <sup>9</sup> It was the French Consul General at Mosul, Paul-Émile Botta, who excavated Sargon's palace at Khorsabad (Arabic-Dur-Sharrukin) from 1842 to 1844, bringing to light the existence of this Assyrian monarch. Sargon II reigned from 722 to 705 B.C. Cf. Jack Lewis (1999), *Archaeology and the Bible* (Henderson, TN: Hester Publications), p. 54.





**N**UMBERS 5:11-22 presents a curious and somewhat difficult Bible passage. The text says:

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'If a man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him so that another man has sexual relations with her, and this is hidden from her husband and her impurity is undetected (since there is no witness against her and she has not been caught in the act), and if feelings of jealousy come over her husband and he suspects his wife and she is impure—or if he is jealous and suspects her even though she is not impure—then he is to take his wife to the priest. He must also take an offering of a tenth of an ephah of barley flour on her behalf. He must not pour olive oil on it or put incense on it, because it is a grain offering for jealousy, a reminder-offering to draw attention to wrongdoing. The priest shall bring her and have her stand before the Lord. Then he shall take some holy water in a clay jar and put some dust from the tabernacle floor into the water. After the priest has had the woman stand before the Lord, he shall loosen her hair and place in her hands the reminder-offering, the grain offer-

ing for jealousy, while he himself holds the bitter water that brings a curse. Then the priest shall put the woman under oath and say to her, "If no other man has had sexual relations with you and you have not gone astray and become impure while married to your husband, may this bitter water that brings a curse not harm you. But if you have gone astray while married to your husband and you have made yourself impure by having sexual relations with a man other than your husband"—here the priest is to put the woman under this curse—"may the Lord cause you to become a curse among your people when he makes your womb miscarry and your abdomen swell. May this water that brings a curse enter your body so that your abdomen swells or your womb miscarries." Then the woman is to say, "Amen. So be it"" (NIV).

Skeptics claim that these verses prove that the God of the Old Testament condones abortion. As Atheist John Hamill wrote: "The verses appear to describe explicit divine support for abortion. In fact, the context in which it seems that Yahweh approves of abortion, is when a husband wishes to force his wife to terminate a pregnancy (even against her will) if he sus-

pects he may not be the biological father."<sup>1</sup> Do these verses condone abortion?<sup>2</sup>

First, it is important to ask why the skeptic believes this passage discusses abortion. The bulk of the passage has to do with adultery and nowhere even mentions pregnancy. The accusation of condoning abortion is based primarily, if not entirely, on the final verses that say of the woman "your womb miscarry" and "may this water that brings a curse enter your body so that your abdomen swells and your womb miscarries." In truth, the NIV in this case provides an unfortunate and inaccurate translation of the terms in the passage. Compare how these terms from verses 21 and 22 are translated in other versions.

NKJV: "when the Lord makes your thigh rot and your belly swell...and make your belly swell and your thigh rot."

KJV: "when the Lord doth make thy thigh to rot, and thy belly to swell...to make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot."

ESV: "when the Lord makes your thigh fall away and your body swell...and make your womb swell and your thigh fall away."

ASV: "doth make thy thigh fall away, and thy body to swell...and make thy body to swell, and thy thigh fall away."

Notice that other translations say nothing about a miscarriage or miscarrying. The term that the NIV translates "womb" is *yarek*. This word actually means "thigh, loin, side, or base."<sup>3</sup> It can be used to describe both males and females. It is used in Genesis 32:25 to describe the area that God wounded on Jacob when they wrestled, described as "the socket of his hip" (NKJV). It obviously could not have been

(cont. on p. 32)



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## Objections to BAPTISM

PSALMS 81-83

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their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.  
15 The haters of the LORD should have <sup>1</sup>submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.  
16 He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

### PSALM 82

A Psalm of A'saph.

GOD standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.  
2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Se-lah.  
3 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.  
4 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.  
5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.  
6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.  
7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.  
8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

### PSALM 83

A Song or Psalm of A'saph.

KEEP not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.  
2 For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.  
3 They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.  
4 They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel

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God's renewed favour sought

4 O LORD God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?

5 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.

6 Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves.

7 Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

9 Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.

10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.

11 She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.

12 Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?

13 The bear out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

14 Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

15 And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself.

16 It is burned with fire, it is cut down: thy enemies perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

17 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the man of thy right hand, upon the man of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.

18 So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.

19 Turn us again, O LORD God

### PSALM 81

To the chief Musician upon Gittith. A Psalm of A'saph.

STRENGTH: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.

2 Take a psalm, and bring hither the umbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

3 Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.

4 For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.

5 This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt: where I heard a language that I understood not.

6 I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots.

7 Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder: I removed thee at the waters of Mer-i-bah. Se-lah.

8 Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me;

9 There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.

10 I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.

12 So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.

13 Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!

14 I should soon have subdued

### PSALM 80

be angry for ever? shall thy jealousy burn like fire?

6 Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.

7 For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place.

8 Remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us: for we are brought very low.

9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.

10 Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God? let him be glorified among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed.

11 Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die;

12 And render unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O LORD.

13 So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will shew forth thy praise to all generations.

### PSALM 80

To the chief Musician upon Shō-shānā-im-E-dith, A Psalm of A'saph.

GIVE ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cher-ū-bims, shine forth.

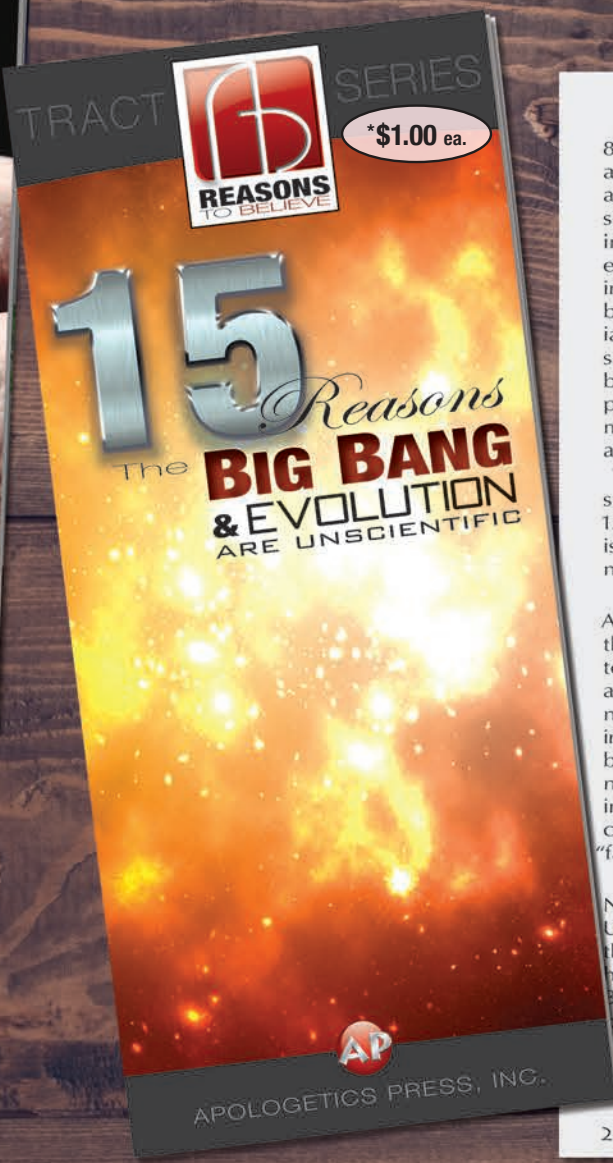
2 Before E-phrā-im and Benjamin and Mā-nās-seh stir up thy strength, and come and save us.

3 Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.





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According to the secular model, some 800 million years later (3.8 billion years ago), life sprang into existence on Earth and Darwinian evolution began. The initial single-celled organisms eventually evolved into multicellular organisms (and the earliest plants), which eventually evolved into invertebrates, which then evolved into vertebrates. Vertebrate fish evolved into amphibians, then reptiles, which gave rise to dinosaurs and mammals. Dinosaurs evolved into birds, and mammals ultimately evolved into primates. The genus *homo*, within the primate group, arrived some 2-3 million years ago, ultimately evolving into humans.

There are many problems with this "just so" story as proposed by naturalists. Here are 15 of them, some of which apply to naturalistic evolution exclusively, and some to both naturalistic and theistic evolution:

### #1: The Origin of the Laws of Science

At the heart of science is man's discovery of the laws of nature that govern the Universe, telling it how to behave. These laws exist, and yet there is absolutely no evidence from nature that such laws can "write" themselves into existence. One cannot be a naturalist and believe such a thing happens, since there is no evidence that such a thing could happen in nature. To believe that the laws of science could write themselves would require a blind "faith."

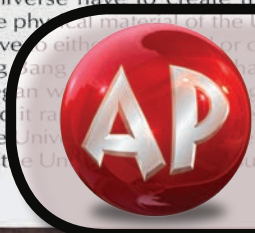
### #2: The Origin of Matter/Energy

Not only would the laws that govern the Universe have to create themselves, but the physical material of the Universe would have to either come from nowhere or be created by some supernatural power. The Big Bang theory, which claims that the Universe began with a singularity in one place and it rapidly expanded, eventually forming the Universe as we know it, does not solve the problem. One cannot believe the matter of the Universe could write itself into existence.

fluctuation must also believe in a field of energy that "fluctuated." Naturalistic model explains the origin of matter, but rather, what happened to already existing material at the beginning. Again, upon examination of the science from the natural realm, one finds three relevant laws of science which indicate a natural origin of the Universe. The First Law of Thermodynamics indicates that matter and energy do not create themselves from nothing. Energy can be converted from matter (and vice versa), but the amount of matter/energy in the Universe must be constant. Either matter/energy in the natural realm were created by God outside of the natural realm, or matter and energy are eternal. Few cosmologists today accept the latter in light of the findings of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which states that entropy happens. We are steadily running down usable energy—that is, the Universe is "running out" or "running down," implying it could not have existed forever or even for a long time since have exhausted all usable energy and be in a state of Universal heat death. The Law of Causality—perhaps the most fundamental of all scientific laws—indicates that every effect that we see in the natural realm always has a cause. Since the Universe is an effect, it requires a cause. Since energy could not exist forever or even for a long time in a natural way, the Cause must be of a (i.e., super-) nature.

### #3: The Horizon/Flatness Problem

Several other problems with the Big Bang theory are that the entire Universe appears to be expanding from a single point, which is not what we observe. The Universe has exchanged its energy with other locations and come to equilibrium in all places in the Universe, however far away.



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Jacob's "womb." Judges 3:16 contains the word, describing Ehud's dagger that he fastened "on his right **thigh**." Furthermore, the term translated "miscarry" is the Hebrew word *naphal*, which means, "to fall, waste away, rot."<sup>4</sup> It can be used as broadly as an animal falling into a pit (as in Exodus 21:33), a sword falling from one's hand (Ezekiel 30:22), or a violent or untimely death (Judges 5:27). The word could possibly be used to describe the death of an unborn infant, but is not in any way confined to the idea of a miscarriage and should only be translated as such when there is a very clear connection to a baby. When the word describes what happens to "the thigh" (*yarek*), there is no verbal connection to any type of pregnancy or child and should not be translated as miscarriage, which is why the other major translations say, "thigh fall away," "thigh rot," etc. Furthermore, it should be noted that the curse is directed at the woman. It is **her** thigh that shall rot off if she is found guilty of adultery. It is **her** belly, abdomen, or middle section that will swell. In order to accuse God or the Israelites of condoning abortion, there must be a clear statement or connection to an unborn baby in the text. Needless to say, that connection does not exist. Thus, we can dismiss the accusation that this passage proves that God was instructing the Israelites to perform abortion.

Let us then move on to what the passage actually discusses. In the context, if a man believes his wife has committed adultery, he takes her to the Tabernacle where she is instructed to drink "holy water" that has some dust from the tabernacle floor and some type of parchment or paper fragments

that are scraped into the water (Numbers 5:23). If the woman is innocent, then nothing adverse happens to her (Numbers 5:28). If she committed adultery, then her thigh would rot, her belly would swell, and she would "become a curse among her people." Notice that this entire procedure implies the fact that divine judgment is directly at work in this case. There is no secret formula in the water that somehow is able to detect whether or not the woman has committed adultery. No special chemicals are concocted to cause sickness if adultery has occurred, but that are harmless if she has been faithful. The entire ordeal is designed to make a public example to show that God was working personally in the lives of the Israelites.

When we look more closely, we notice that the text mentions that there were no witnesses to the supposed adultery and the woman was not caught (Numbers 5:13). Some have argued that the Bible writers are showing favoritism here because no man is accused with the woman. The point is, however, that the husband suspects the wife of adultery, but has no physical evidence of her suspected accomplice. There is no favoritism toward the man in this instance, since the Old Testament clearly states that if a man and woman are caught in adultery, and there are witnesses, then both of them were to be punished equally (Deuteronomy 22:22). In this case, the woman is suspected of adultery **and only God knows** (besides the potentially guilty parties) whether or not she is guilty. If she is guilty, then it is **God who sees and knows and will punish her**. There is nothing inherent in the water that makes her sick

in the case of adultery, but does nothing in the case of innocence. [As an aside, when God did act in such cases, and the woman fell ill and was cursed, there is no reason to think that God would let the guilty man go unpunished. Moses' admonition to the men of the tribes of Reuben and Gad, when he stated, "be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23), would surely apply in this case. The stories of David's adultery and the sin of Achan illustrate God's ability and willingness to be directly involved in the reparation of sin.]

The skeptic's accusation that Numbers 5:21-22 shows that God or the Israelites condoned abortion is groundless. The text never mentions a pregnancy, and the NIV translation of the terms "miscarry" or "miscarries" is unfounded. The punishment for any adultery that took place is directed at the woman. And God's involvement in the ceremony is necessary for it to have any significance. There was nothing in the water that would or could cause an abortion, cause sickness, or differentiate between a guilty or innocent person. Only the all-knowing God could manifest the woman's guilt or innocence.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> John Hamill (2018), "What Does the Bible Say About Abortion?" Atheist Ireland, <https://atheist.ie/2018/04/what-does-the-bible-say-about-abortion/>.
- <sup>2</sup> For an in-depth look at the biblical position on abortion, see Eric Lyons (2010), "Abortion and the Ungodly Irrationality Surrounding Unwanted Infants," *Reason & Revelation*, 30[6]:41-47. Also Dave Miller (2003), "Abortion & the Bible," <http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=7&article=445&topic=25>.
- <sup>3</sup> "Yarek," *Strong's Concordance*, <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/3409.htm>.
- <sup>4</sup> "Naphal," <https://www.studylight.org/lexicons/hebrew/5307.html>.



## What is the "Firmament" of Genesis 1:6?

Jeff Miller, Ph.D.

MUCH discussion has centered on the meaning of the term "firmament" (Hebrew *raqia*; "expanse"—ESV, NIV, NASB) in Genesis 1:6,7,8,14,15,17,20. The word "firmament" leaves the impression that Moses was saying a solid dome surrounds the Earth, which Bible skeptics have used to argue that the Bible teaches erroneous beliefs from antiquity.<sup>1</sup>

The translation "firmament," however, is not so much a translation of the original Hebrew term as it is a transliteration of a term used in the Latin Vulgate (i.e., *firmamentum*) which was translated from the Greek Septuagint term (*stereoma*) that was used for the Hebrew *raqia*. The uninspired translators of the Septuagint, who were translating for an Egyptian pharaoh in Egypt,<sup>2</sup> were apparently influenced by the then conventional belief in Egypt that the heavens are a stone vault.<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew term *raqia*, however, does not suggest such a meaning. Rather, it refers to something that has been stretched, spread, or beaten out—like metal.<sup>4</sup> The idea is that on day two, God divided the

waters of Earth, spreading them out from one another and moving some above the Earth, and creating that which holds those waters apart—much like what a solid would do.

God then defined the *raqia* as "heaven(s)" (*shamayim*). *Shamayim*, however, was used in three distinct ways by the Hebrews (and by God through His inspired spokesmen). It could mean the sky or atmosphere where the birds fly and the clouds gather (Jeremiah 4:25; Matthew 6:26). It could mean outer space where the stars are situated (Genesis 1:14-15; Psalm 19:4,6; Isaiah 13:10), and it could also mean the place where God dwells (Psalm 2:4; Hebrews 9:24). Context must be used to determine which heaven is referenced. In this case, the heaven identified would affect one's identification of the water that God separated.

The typical interpretation of *raqia* and "heaven" in Genesis 1:6 is that God created the sky on day two, separating water vapor in the sky (clouds) from liquid water. Most commentators and translators support this interpretation. Various Creation scientists have theorized

that the waters above the firmament were not the sky, but rather, formed a water canopy like a bubble that burst at the Flood. The idea is attractive, as the greenhouse effect that would be generated helps theoretically to explain, for example, the long lifespans of the patriarchs of Genesis five. While the theory has strengths, its weaknesses have caused it to fall on hard times—namely, that simulations indicate the greenhouse effect caused by the canopy would be too severe. Unless the solar constant was reduced to ¼ of its current value, water on the Earth would boil and life would be exterminated.<sup>5</sup> Further, although there still may have been a canopy of some sort, the features of the canopy theory that made it attractive have been shown to be explainable in other ways.

Other Creation scientists have suggested that the second meaning of heaven is being referenced, and the *raqia* refers to outer space, since the stars were placed in the "heaven" that God created (vs. 17) and the birds created on day five are described as flying across the "face" of the heavens, rather than in the heavens (vs. 20). This interpretation would mean that the waters above the *raqia* would be water on the outskirts of the Universe, helping to explain why the stars appear to be accelerating outward, as though drawn by a distant gravitational source.<sup>6</sup>

Regardless of the meaning of *raqia*, the Bible does not support or endorse erroneous beliefs of mankind from antiquity. The Bible is accurate with regard to its scientific allusions 100% of the time.



## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Isaac Asimov (1981), *In the Beginning* (New York: Crown), p. 33; Schadewald, Robert J. (1983), "The Evolution of Bible-science," *Scientists Confront Creationism*, ed. Laurie R. Godfrey (New York: W.W. Norton), p. 290.
- <sup>2</sup> *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, with an English Translation* (1970) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), pp. i-ii.
- <sup>3</sup> J. Barton Payne (1980), "raqia," *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason Archer, Jr. and Bruce Waltke (Chicago, IL: Moody), 2:862; James Orr, ed. (1956), "Astronomy," *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 1:315.
- <sup>4</sup> Orr, p. 315; L. Koehler, et al. (1994-2000), *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, electronic ed.), p. 1290; F. Brown, S. Driver, and C. Briggs (1906), *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson), p. 956.
- <sup>5</sup> Larry Vardiman (2003), "Temperature Profiles for an Optimized Water Vapor Canopy," *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Creationism*, ed. R.L. Ivey (Pittsburgh, PA: Creation Science Fellowship), <http://static.icr.org/i/pdf/technical/Temperature-Profiles-for-an-Optimized-Water-Vapor-Canopy.pdf>.
- <sup>6</sup> D. Russell Humphreys (1994), *Starlight and Time* (Colorado Springs, CO: Master Books); John G. Hartnett (2015), "A Biblical Creationist Cosmogony," *Answers Research Journal*, 8:13-20, <http://www.answersingenesis.org/arj/v8/creationist-cosmogony.pdf>.

## Who Did Cain Marry?



Jeff Miller, Ph.D.

**S**KEPTICS argue that the Bible is a book of mythology, filled with inconsistencies and impossibilities. Clarence Darow, the agnostic defense attorney in the famous Scopes Monkey Trial, scoffed at the Bible's account of Cain finding a wife, asking William Jennings Bryan, "Did you ever discover where Cain got his wife?"<sup>1</sup> Writing in *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Marry Leith argued that the text implies there must have been "other people 'out there' when God created Adam and Eve" from whom Cain picked a wife.<sup>2</sup> Genesis 3:20, however, indicates that "all living" descended from Eve. If God created only Adam and Eve, and all other humans came from

them, and Eve had only birthed Cain and Abel by the time Abel was murdered, who was Cain's wife (Genesis 4:17)?

First, as discussed elsewhere,<sup>3</sup> Genesis 4 gives several indications that a significant amount of time likely passed between the birth of Cain and Abel and the murder of Abel. If humanity was being fruitful and multiplying as God commanded (Genesis 1:28), it is reasonable to assume that Adam and Eve were not waiting many years before conceiving their next child. Genesis 5:4 indicates that Adam and Eve did, in fact, have "other sons and daughters" which are not listed in the text. If they had a single child every two

years (i.e., no twins), and their children began marrying at the age of 19 and immediately began having children as well, there would have been roughly 300 people on the Earth by the time Cain was 100<sup>4</sup>—a plausible age as to when Cain may have killed his brother.<sup>5</sup> Cain likely married either a sister or niece.

Some see a problem with that explanation, as it implies that Cain (and many others) were forced to commit incest—an illicit union in God's sight. God's law concerning incest, however, was not instituted until the Law of Moses came into effect (Leviticus 18), **likely at least 2,500 years after Creation**. It is generally assumed that the reason God outlawed incest at that point was due to the state of the human genome by the time of Moses. Incestuous relations significantly increase the likelihood of birth defects, as well as deleterious psychological problems.<sup>6</sup> A child inherits 23 chromosomes from each of his parents. By having children with close relatives, many of those chromosomes are duplicated in the offspring—including those genes that are deleterious, rapidly increasing the odds of major physical problems.

When God created Adam and Eve, however, their genomes were pristine—without defect. Duplicate chromosomes would not have caused the defects observed today. After Adam and Eve were evicted from the Garden, denied the "healing effects" of the Tree of Life, and were subjected to the cursed Earth (Genesis 3:14-19), their bodies and genomes would have begun to suffer the effects of entropy in earnest. The Universe, and everything in it, is growing "old like a garment"—



gradually decaying (Psalm 102:25-26). Ultraviolet and other forms of radiation (especially radiation from the Flood), as well as other mutagens and DNA replication errors have increased the accumulation of mutations in the genome. After over two millennia of genetic entropy, by the time of Moses the number of mutations within the human genome would have begun to make incest a dangerous practice.

Cain would have married a close relative. However, as would be predicted if the Bible is inspired by the God Who created the genome, and therefore knew of the growing dangers of incest long before humans had discovered the genome, God asserted Himself at the right time and prohibited the dangerous practice that He had previously sanctioned.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> "Scopes Trial: Excerpts from the Court Transcripts," Day 7, [http://faculty.smu.edu/jclam/science\\_religion/trial\\_transcripts.html](http://faculty.smu.edu/jclam/science_religion/trial_transcripts.html).
- <sup>2</sup> Mary Joan Winn Leith (2013), "Who Did Cain Marry?" *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 39[6]:22, November/December.
- <sup>3</sup> Eric Lyons (2013), "Does Genesis 4 Indicate that God Specifically Created Others Besides Adam and Eve?" Apologetics Press, <http://www.apologeticspress.org/Alleged-Discrepancies.aspx?article=4585>.
- <sup>4</sup> NOTE: If the lifespans of the 300 were roughly that of the patriarchs of Genesis 5, death from old age would not have occurred by that point. It is possible that some of the 300 died from other causes, but it is also likely that children were being born sooner than every two years and that twins were common since God wished for the Earth to be filled (Genesis 1:28; 9:1). Regardless, even if half of the 300 had died, Cain still would have had dozens of possible marriage candidates.
- <sup>5</sup> Lyons.
- <sup>6</sup> J. Henderson (1983), "Is Incest Harmful?" *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 28[1]:34-40; Hal Herzog (2012), "The Problem With Incest," Psychology Today On-line, October 11, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/animals-and-us/201210/the-problem-incest>.

## Belief in God is Hard-Wired Into Man **Kyle Butt, M.Div.**

A.C. Grayling wrote a book titled *The God Argument*. Those in atheistic circles have lauded it as a profound and insightful representation of atheism. Remarkably, Grayling makes an error that is extremely common within the writings of unbelievers. He contends that mankind has no religious nature and that all belief in God is a product of teaching passed on to children from parents, teachers, or other environmental factors. He wrote:

It would, though, be far better if religious doctrines and systems were not taught to people until they had attained maturity. If this were the case, how many would subscribe to a religion? Without being given a predisposition through childhood indoctrination to think there might be something in one of the many and conflicting religious beliefs on offer, the likely answer would surely be: not very many.<sup>1</sup>

It seems as though Grayling completely fails to acknowledge the massive amount of research that proves that belief in God comes naturally to mankind and is hard-wired in to the fabric of humanity.<sup>2</sup> Atheist Richard Dawkins contradicts Grayling and admits that humans have "a lust for gods."<sup>3</sup> He noted that people are "innately predisposed to be creationists" and

said that children are "native teleologists, and many never grow out of it."<sup>4</sup> Renowned atheist Sam Harris is forced to concede that "several experiments suggest that children are predisposed to assume design and intention behind natural events—leaving many psychologists and anthropologists to believe that children, **left entirely on their own devices**, would invent some conception of God."<sup>5</sup>

Since atheism cannot explain why people are born to believe in God, many of them simply deny the truth that they are. The logical explanation for this innate belief is the idea that the Creator "put eternity" in our hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11), so that all people might "seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:27).

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> A.C. Grayling (2013), *The God Argument: The Case Against Religion and for Humanism* (New York: Bloomsbury), p. 39.
- <sup>2</sup> See Kyle Butt (2013), "Why is Belief in God Natural to Mankind?" <https://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=12&article=4655>.
- <sup>3</sup> Richard Dawkins (2006), *The God Delusion* (New York: Houghton Mifflin), p. 169.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 180-181.
- <sup>5</sup> Sam Harris (2010), *The Moral Landscape* (New York: Free Press), p. 151, emp. added.

## SPEAKING SCHEDULES

### Kyle Butt

March 31

Tupelo, MS

(662) 842-9263

### Eric Lyons

March 8-10

Lexington, KY

(859) 299-9511

March 22-24

Mechanicsville, VA

(804) 746-8224

### Dave Miller

March 3

Montgomery, AL

(334) 264-2985

March 23-24

Huntsville, AL

(256) 895-8717

March 31

Huntsville, AL

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### Jeff Miller

March 15-17

Covington, TN

(901) 476-8278

March 29-31

Blackwater, MO

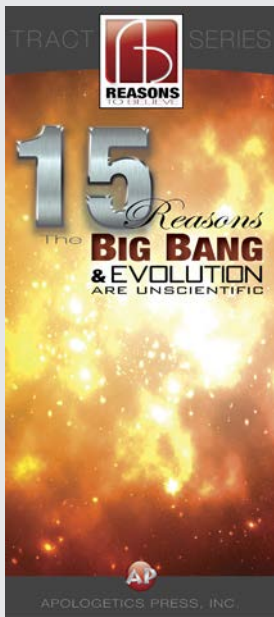
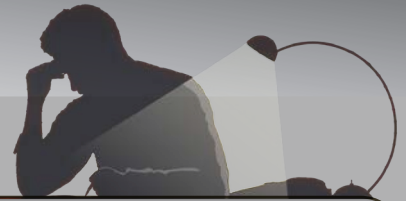
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## NOTE FROM

## *The Editor*



### New “Fat” Tract

One of the avenues through which Apologetics Press has sought to promote the cause of Christ has been through the medium of the traditional tract. Hence, AP has published several lines of tracts for both adults and children. A more recent innovation has been the development of what we have named “Fat Tracts.” These tracts differ from the more traditional tract primarily in terms of length. With this format we are able to address important subjects that require more explanation and instruction than those topics that can be addressed with less discussion. This venue is particularly appealing to those who would like to dig deeper into some of the “thorny” subjects that threaten an accurate understanding of the Christian viewpoint.

The latest addition to this line of tracts is titled “15 Reasons to Believe the Big Bang and Evolution are Unscientific” written by AP scientist Dr. Jeff Miller who holds a Ph.D. in Biomechanical Engineering from Auburn. While much of the scientific community has ensconced itself in stubborn opposition to the biblical worldview, nevertheless, the Bible reflects remarkable compatibility with true science. After all, both natural revelation and special revelation arose from the same Source: the infinite, eternal Creator. As documented in this latest tract, the prevailing position of our day regarding origins—of both the Universe and human beings—is riddled with scientific errors.

Seven other tracts are also available in the “Fat Tract” series. All AP tracts have attractive covers and are filled with vital information designed to assist in the ongoing effort to advance the truth pertaining to God and the Christian Faith.

**Dave Miller**

See Center Spread  
for More Details